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REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3-9 are pending.

No new subject matter has been added to the application.

Claims 1 and 3-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 in view of the combination of US patent no. 6,252,676 to Azima et al. and US patent no. 6,734,989 to Tsunekawa. This rejection is respectfully traversed as follows.

In determining a case for obviousness under 35 U.S.C. §103, it is necessary to show that the combination of prior art teachings is proper, and that those teachings constitute an improvement which results from the predictable use of prior art elements according to their established functions. Furthermore, obviousness is a question of law based on the underlying factual inquiries of:

- (A) Determining the scope and content of the prior art;
- (B) Ascertaining the differences between the claimed invention and the prior art; and
- (C) Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the art.

The Applicant disagrees with some of the substantive factual findings by the Office and traverses those findings based on the following reasoned statements.

A person skilled in the art understands that the processing of an image band-by-band is provided as in pending claim 1 and similarly as used in Tsunekawa (col. 5 lines 19-22), where a band is a partition of an image divided along raster lines. This interpretation is consistent with par. [0014] in the current application. The pending independent claims 1 and 8 are novel over Azima since the reference does not disclose the step of "defining for each color a plurality of

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bands constituting the output data".

A person skilled in the art, when faced with the problem of generating from an input image output data in two different formats may arguably combine the teachings of Azima and Tsunekawa to:

- render and output (Tsunekawa col. 5, line 23) the input image a first time sequentially band-by-band to obtain output data in a first output format; and
- render and output (Tsunekawa col. 5, line 23) the same input image a second time sequentially band-by-band to obtain output data in a second output format.

However even if Azima and Tsunekawa were combined, the combination would not lead to the result according to the pending independent claims 1 and 8, which describe a system and a method that processes input data sequentially band-by-band and whereby the processing of a single band includes producing simultaneously output data in two different output formats.

A method according to independent claims 1 and 8 provides an additional improvement in efficiency over the teachings in Azima and Tsunekawa because a band of the input image needs to be processed only for producing two different output formats. This effect would not be obtained by applying the teachings in Azima and Tsunekawa either by themselves or in combination.

In view of the above arguments Applicants aver that even if Azima and Tsunekawa were combined, the combination would not yield the invention of pending independent claims 1 and 8. Hence, claims 1 and 8 and claims 3-9 dependent thereon are deemed to be patentable over the applied prior art.

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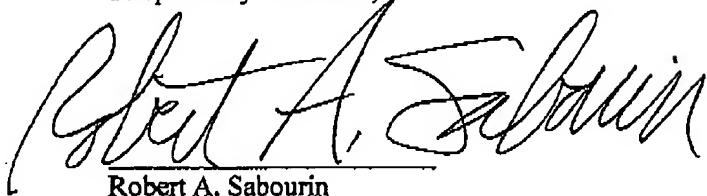
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No fees are believed to be due with this response. However if the Office deems otherwise, please charge any fees due to Deposit Account No. 13-3377 under this general authorization.

It should be noted that the above arguments are directed towards certain patentable distinctions between the claims and the prior art cited. However, the patentable distinctions between the pending claims and the prior art cited are not necessarily limited to those discussed above.

In view of the foregoing remarks, it is respectfully submitted that each rejection of the Office Action has been addressed and overcome so that this application is now in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the application, withdraw the rejections and/or objections, and pass the application to issue. Should questions arise during examination, the Examiner is welcome to contact the applicant's attorney as listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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